THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ISLAM

*

VOLUME 3

The Eastern Islamic World Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Muslim India: the Delhi sultanate

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The emergence of an independent Muslim state in India

Following Muʿizz al Dīn Muḥammad's assassination in 602/1206 the Muslim conquests in the Indo Gangetic plain went their own way. While the Ghūrid heartlands, Ghūr and Fīrūzkūh, were contested among the various princes of his dynasty, further east the beneficiaries were the Turkish slave (*ghulām*; *banda*) commanders to whom the sultan had largely delegated authority.[1] Two of them Tāj al Dīn Yildiz in Ghazna and Quṭb al Dīn Aybak in Lahore were quick to establish their *de facto* autonomy. Aybak was acknowledged by the Khalaj rulers who succeeded Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār at Lakhnawti in Bengal, and thus became the paramount ruler in Muslim India. But Aybak, who contested Ghazna with Yildiz, in turn recognised the overlordship of Muʿizz al Dīn's nephew and successor, Ghiyāth al Dīn Maḥmūd; numismatic evidence suggests that he bore no higher title than malik. After Aybak's death in 607/1210f., his heir Ārām Shāh was soon defeated and killed by Aybak's slave and governor in Budaon, Iltutmish, who had been set up at Delhi. Aybak's territories were now disputed among Iltutmish, Yildiz and another former Ghūrid slave lieutenant, Nāṣir al Dīn Qubacha, who held Multān and Uchch in Sind.

If Aybak was the effective founder of an independent Muslim power in India, Shams al Dīn Iltutmish (607 33/1210 36),[2] was the real architect of the Delhi sultanate. Although he was initially obliged to acknowledge Yildiz's sovereignty and to content himself with the title of malik, his fortunes

1 Irfan Habib, 'Formation of the sultanate ruling class of the thirteenth century', in Irfan Habib (ed.), *Medieval India 1: Researches in the history of India 1200 1750* (Oxford and Delhi, 1992), pp. 5 7.

2 The correct form of the name was established by Simon Digby, 'Iletmish or Iltutmish? A reconsideration of the name of the Dehli sultan', *Iran*, 8 (1970), pp. 57 64.

improved as a consequence of events beyond the Indus. In 612/1215f., the Khwārazm Shāh Muḥammad b. Tekish overwhelmed the last Ghūrid princes and seized Ghazna from Yildiz. Fleeing into the Punjab, Yildiz was defeated by Iltutmish on the historic battlefield of Tarāʾin, captured and later put to death at Budaon. Then, in 617 21/1220 4, the Khwārazmian empire in turn was destroyed by the pagan Mongols under Chinggis Khan. Muḥammad's son Jalāl al Dīn, defeated by the Mongols on the Indus (618/1221), spent three years in exile in the Punjab, where he carved out for himself a short lived principality before returning to Persia. The Mongol forces sent in pursuit were unable to apprehend him and ravaged parts of Sind, besieging Multān for several weeks (621/1224); they did not touch the territory of Delhi. Iltutmish had at first made peace with Jalāl al Dīn, though he seems subsequently to have assisted Qubacha against him.[3]

Qubacha's territories had therefore borne the brunt of the Khwārazmian and Mongol attacks; and this may have weakened him in the face of Iltutmish's assault in 625/1228, when Uchch and Multān fell and Qubacha drowned himself in the Indus to avoid capture. Within the next few years, Iltutmish expelled one of Jalāl al Dīn's lieutenants from Kurramān and secured the submission of another, Ḥasan Qarluq, who ruled in Binbān. In 628/1230f. his son Nāṣir al Dīn Maḥmūd overthrew the Khalaj ruler of Lakhnawti, who had assumed the title of sultan, and when a rebellion broke out on the prince's death soon afterwards Iltutmish crushed it in person and brought the Muslim held regions of Bengal under his control (630/1232f.). Even prior to this, in 626/1229, he had received a patent from the ʿAbbāsid caliph al Mustanṣir, investing him with the government of the whole of Muslim India. When he died (633/1236), his dominions extended from the river Jhelum almost to the Ganges delta.

Sultans and nobility, *c.* 1220–1295

The elite of the early Delhi sultanate comprised overwhelmingly first generation immigrants from Persia and Central Asia: Persians ('Tājīks'), Turks, Ghūrīs and also Khalaj from the hot regions (*garmsīr*) of modern Afghanistan. Even if Fakhr i Mudabbir, writing in 602/1206, exaggerates the improvement in their fortunes that immigrants could expect,[4] it is clear that

3 See Peter Jackson, 'Jalāl al Dīn, the Mongols and the Khwarazmian conquest of the Panjāb and Sind', *Iran*, 28 (1990), pp. 45 54.

4 Fakhr i Mudabbir, *Shajarat* [or *Baḥr*] *al ansāb*, partial edn by Sir E. Denison Ross as *Taʿríkh* [sic] *i Fakhr al Dín Mubárakshàh* (London, 1927), p. 20.

from the time of the Ghūrid campaigns northern India exerted a strong attraction upon them. Such immigration grew in the wake of the Mongol campaigns of devastation, and Iltutmish is said to have encouraged it.[5] The majority of the newcomers, perhaps, would have been military men, but a later writer mentions also *sayyid*s and *ʿulamāʾ*.[6] Among the latter class was the historian Jūzjānī, a refugee from Ghūr, who first entered Qubacha's service but deserted to Iltutmish on his invasion of Sind in 625/1228, and later rose to be three times grand *qāḍī* of the Delhi empire.

Like the Ghūrids, however, Iltutmish built up a corps of Turkish slave troops, known from the sultan's own *laqab* as the Shamsīs. The later historian Ḍiyā yi Baranī (*fl.* 758/1357) refers to them by the term *chihilgānī*s: its signifi cance is unclear, though the distributive form may well indicate that each commanded a group of forty *ghulām*s.[7] Baranī characterises Iltutmish's mostly short lived successors as mere ciphers who watched helplessly while his Turkish *ghulām*s wrested power from the free nobles who had entered Muslim India during his reign.[8]

In some measure, this picture can be substantiated from the *Ṭabaqāt i Nāṣirī* which Jūzjānī completed in 658/1260. Under Iltutmish's son Rukn al Dīn Fīrūz Shāh (r. 633 4/1236) the Turkish household slaves massacred a great many Tājīk bureaucrats;[9] shortly afterwards they overthrew and murdered Fīrūz Shāh in a rising on behalf of his half sister Raḍiyya (r. 634 7/1236 40). She in turn was deposed when she demonstrated signs of independence and showed excessive favour to her African (*Ḥabashī*) master of the horse; the Turks enthroned another son of Iltutmish, Muʿizz al Dīn Bahrām Shāh (r. 637 9/1240 2). A number of Turkish *amīr*s who attempted to reinstate her as sultan were defeated, and Raḍiyya was killed by Hindus while in flight near Kaithal (637/1240). Following her deposition, considerable power was vested in a military officer who bore the style of *nāʾib* ('viceroy'); Bahrām Shāh's own enthronement was contingent on his acceptance of the Turkish *ghulām* Ikhtiyār al Dīn Aybak in this position.[10]

5 Jājarmī, preface to his translation of al Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al dīn*, British Library ms. Or. 8194, fo. 3v; Nazir Ahmad, 'Bérúní's Kitāb aṣ Ṣaydana and its Persian translation', *Indo Iranica*, 14, part 3 (1961), p. 17; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt i Nāṣirī*, ed. ʿAbd al Ḥaiy Ḥabībī, 2nd edn, 2 vols. (Kabul, AH solar 1342 3), vol. I, pp. 440 1.

6 ʿIṣāmī (*c.* 1350), *Futūḥ al salāṭīn*, ed. A. S. Usha (Madras, 1948), pp. 114 15.

7 Peter Jackson, *The Delhi sultanate: A political and military history* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 66; Gavin R. G. Hambly, 'Who were the Chihilgānī, the forty slaves of Sultan Shams al Dīn Iltutmish of Delhi?', *Iran*, 10 (1972), pp. 57 62.

8 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, ed. Saiyid Ahmad Khán (Calcutta, 1861 2), pp. 27 8, 550.

9 Jūzjānī, vol. I, p. 456; cf. also vol. II, p. 36.

10 Jūzjānī, vol. I, p. 463.

Aybak's murder at the sultan's instigation prompted fears that he planned the wholesale annihilation of the Turkish slave commanders, and an army sent to defend the frontier following the Mongol sack of Lahore turned back and besieged Delhi. Bahrām Shāh was put to death and replaced by Fīrūz Shāh's son, ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Masʿūd Shāh (r. 639 44/1242 6). We know relatively little of internal politics during Masʿūd Shāh's reign, but a later writer ascribes his downfall to resentment at his reliance upon African (*Ḥabashī*) slave elements.[11] He was displaced in favour of Iltutmish's youngest son, Nāṣir al Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh (r. 644 64/1246 66), a shadowy figure in our sources, who passed much of his relatively long reign under the tutelage of his viceroy (*nāʾib*), Iltutmish's former slave, Bahāʾ al Dīn Balaban. On Maḥmūd Shāh's death, Balaban succeeded him as Sultan Ghiyāth al Dīn Balaban (r. 664 85/1266 87).

Baranī clearly exaggerates the incapacity of Iltutmish's progeny. Raḍiyya and Bahrām Shāh both displayed signs of energy, and all four monarchs of Iltutmish's line appear to have tried to build up power bases of their own. The implication, moreover, that the Turkish slaves constituted a discrete or monolithic group is simplistic. No faction comprised exclusively Turkish slave officers. They are found collaborating with *amīr*s of Ghūrī and Tājīk origin as well as free Turkish nobles;[12] while the opposition to Balaban, which included prominent Turkish *ghulām* commanders, was fronted by an Indian slave *amīr*, ʿImād al Dīn Rayhān.[13] It is possible, of course, that our perspective is distorted not only by Baranī but also by Jūzjānī, who was writing for Balaban, himself a Turkish *ghulām*. Turkish slave officers may only seem to dominate the political landscape because they are the principal focus of the penultimate section (*ṭabaqa*) of his work.

Moreover, far from eliminating immigrant notables the Turkish *ghulām* element ultimately lost out to them. Fugitives from the territories conquered by the Mongols continued to enter Muslim India during Balaban's reign, among them the Khalaj *amīr* and future sultan, Jalāl al Dīn. From 659/1261, when the Mongol empire dissolved in civil war, even Mongol notables sought asylum in Delhi, where they became known as 'neo Muslims' (*naw musulmānān*), and a whole quarter of the old city was assigned to them.[14] Balaban has been accused

11 Yaḥyāʾ ibn Aḥmad Sirhindī, *Tārīkh i Mubārakshāhī*, ed. S. M. Hidayat Hosain (Calcutta, 1931), p. 34.
12 Peter Jackson, 'The *Mamlūk* institution in early Muslim India', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1990), pp. 347 9, and Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 68 9.
13 Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 71 3.
14 Firishta, *Gulshan i Ibrāhīmī*, lithograph edn, 2 vols. (Bombay, AH 1247), vol. I, p. 131, citing the late eighth/fourteenth century writer ʿAyn al Mulk Bījāpūrī; Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 133.

of sapping the strength of the Turkish nobility by destroying many of his erstwhile Shamsī colleagues; but like his old master Iltutmish he clearly sought to promote his own Turkish *ghulāms* (known as 'Ghiyāthīs'), several of whom received high military command and lucrative assignments (*iqṭā*ʿs).

Balaban's elder son Muḥammad perished in battle with the Mongols (683/1284); and when the old sultan died, a party among the nobility ignored the claims of both Muḥammad's son Kaykhusraw and Balaban's younger son, Bughra Khān, and installed the latter's young and pliable son, Muʿizz al Dīn Kayqubād (r. 685 9/1287 90). Kaykhusraw, who made an unsuccessful bid for Mongol support, was murdered. Bughrā Khan, who governed Lakhnawti, advanced west in a bid for the throne, but was reconciled with his son and contented himself with autonomy in Bengal. Kayqubād fell increasingly under the control of the powerful justiciar (*dādbek*), Niẓām al Dīn, who destroyed many of Balaban's Turkish slave officers, and of the immigrant 'neo Muslim' Mongol *amīr*s. After Niẓām al Dīn's own murder, a faction deposed the ailing Kayqubād in favour of his infant son, Shams al Dīn Kayūmarth (r. 689/1290), but lacked the strength to resist the Khalaj commander Jalāl al Dīn, the gover nor of Sāmāna, who eliminated both Kayqubād and the child ruler and himself assumed the title of sultan as Jalāl al Dīn Fīrūz Shāh (r. 689 95/1290 6).

During the seventh/thirteenth century the Muslim held territories in west ern Bengal and Bihār were often in rebellion under ambitious governors; from Kayqubād's accession (685/1287) they formed an independent sultanate until their reconquest in 724/1324. The Delhi sultan's authority often barely extended beyond the lower and middle Indus Valley, the eastern Punjab, the towns of the Dūāb and parts of Awadh. Only a relatively small area, comprising Delhi and its environs (*ḥawālī*) and perhaps one or two other strongpoints such as Gwalior, was retained as *khāliṣa*, the 'reserved' territory, exploited directly by the sultan's own revenue officials. The monarch could do no more than grant out other territories to his officers as *iqṭā*ʿ: that is, the grantee (*muqṭa*ʿ) was responsible for extracting tribute from the local chiefs (*rānagān*, *muqaddamān*) and headmen (*khūṭān*), maintaining himself and a body of troops from the proceeds and, by the turn of the century, forwarding the surplus (*fawāḍil*) to Delhi. In Balaban's reign the appointment of an accountant (*khwāja*) to each *iqṭā*ʿ indicates the government's concern both to maximise its revenues and to rein in the ambitions of its leading *amīr*s.[15]

15 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 36 7; Irfan Habib, 'Agrarian economy', in Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib (eds.), *The Cambridge economic history of India*, vol. I: *c.1200 c.1750* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 69 70.

Warfare with the Hindu states

The struggles for power at the centre during the seventh/thirteenth century inevitably had an impact on the expansion of the sultanate. In stark contrast with the era of his lieutenancy on Muʿizz al Dīn's behalf, Aybak's reign witnessed no recorded campaigns against independent Hindu kingdoms, and Iltutmish, during the first fifteen years of his reign, is known only to have headed one such expedition, against the Chauhan (Chāhamāna) kingdom of Jālōr. It is clear, moreover, that some of Aybak's conquests were lost after his death and had to be retaken by Iltutmish, only to pass out of Muslim hands again. Two examples will suffice. The great fortress of Ranthanbōr, seat of the senior line of the Chauhan dynasty, had been reduced to tributary status in 587/1191, but must have defied Iltutmish, who took it in 623/1226. Further east, Gwalior had yielded to Aybak in 597/1200f., but was subse quently lost, since Iltutmish recaptured it in 630/1233. Yet both towns were abandoned under Raḍiyya in 635/1237f. Ranthanbōr was repeatedly attacked (in 646/1248, 657/1259 and 691/1292) before its final reduction by ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Khaljī. Gwalior's recovery at some point before 657/1259 was short lived, and thereafter we cannot be sure that it was ever in Muslim hands prior to the eighth/fourteenth century. Even in the 1340s the Moroccan visitor Ibn Baṭṭūṭa describes this important strongpoint as 'an isolated and inaccessible castle in the midst of the infidel Hindus' and sets its garrison at 600 horse men, who were constantly engaged in *jihād*.[16]

The north western districts of the Punjab, as we shall see, lay within the penumbra of Mongol sovereignty; even much of the eastern Punjab was home to imperfectly subdued tribes like the Khokhars, the Bhattīs, the Jats and the Mandāhars of Kaithal. There were numerous *mawāsāt* (sing. *mawās*, 'refuge'), where the sultan's writ barely ran and could be enforced only by painstakingly hacking down the jungle.[17] During his reign, as in his final years as viceroy, Balaban's principal concerns appear to have been the reduction of the hilly tracts (*kūhpāya*) west of the capital, the erection of forts in the Dūāb

16 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al nuẓẓār*, ed. Ch. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti, 4 vols. (Paris, 1853 8), vol. III, pp. 188, 195, and trans. H. A. R. Gibb and C. F. Beckingham, *The travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa AD 1325 1354*, Hakluyt Society, 5 vols. (Cambridge and London, 1958 2000), vol. III, pp. 642, 645.

17 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, vol. III, p. 389 (trans. Gibb and Beckingham, vol. III, pp. 741 2). For an example (Katehr), see Simon Digby, 'Before Timur came: Provincialization of the Delhi sultanate through the fourteenth century', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 47 (2004), p. 302 and n. 5.

and punitive campaigns against the notoriously refractory Hindus of Katehr (now Rohilkhand).

Much of the campaigning by the seventh/thirteenth century monarchs or their representatives, in fact, might seem to have had no purpose and certainly no effect beyond the temporary humiliation of Hindu potentates and the guarantee of annual tribute or the acquisition of large quantities of precious metals and impressive numbers of slaves, horses and elephants. Jūzjānī, it is important to note, suggests that the main purpose of warfare against Hindu kingdoms was to amass the resources which would enable the sultans to raise larger armies to resist the Mongols.[18] Whatever the case, in the wake of such swashbuckling and often risky campaigns, the spread of Muslim settlement, the construction of mosques and the regular extraction of land revenue (*kharāj*) from local Hindu chiefs were a less spectacular and doubtless rather intermittent process.

The Mongol threat in the thirteenth century

The reigns of Iltutmish's first successors witnessed a steady build up of Mongol pressure beyond the Indus. Generals acting on behalf of the qaghan Ögedei (r. 1229 41) destroyed the residue of the Khwārazmian principality, driving Ḥasan Qarluq from Binbān into Sind, and reduced to obedience the other local rulers in present day Afghanistan; they thereby secured the terri tories that had acted as the springboard for Ghūrid invasions of India half a century previously. Kashmir was invaded and reduced to tributary status in *c.* 632/1235. The first Mongol attack on the Delhi sultanate came in 639/1241, when they sacked Lahore. In 643/1245 they invested Uchch, necessitating a relief expedition under Sultan Masʿūd Shāh. From this point onwards Mongol raids upon the westernmost provinces became an annual occurrence. Nor were they an altogether unwelcome element in the politics of the sultanate. Sultan Maḥmūd Shāh's brother Jalāl al Dīn took refuge with them in *c.* 1250, and on the orders of the qaghan Möngke (r. 1251 9) an army under Sali Noyan installed him as ruler of a territory that embraced Lahore, Nandana, Kūjāh (now Gujrat) and Sōdra.[19] We do not know what became of the prince,

18 Jūzjānī, vol. II, p. 57.
19 Karl Jahn, 'Zum Problem der mongolischen Eroberungen in Indien (13. 14. Jahrhundert)', in *Akten des XXIV. internationalen Orientalisten Kongresses München … 1957* (Wiesbaden, 1959), pp. 617 19. I. H. Siddiqui, 'Politics and conditions in the territories under the occupation of Central Asian rulers in north western India 13th and 14th centuries', *Central Asiatic Journal*, 27 (1983), pp. 288 306.

though Küshlü Khan, the sultan's governor of Sind, likewise accepted client status in 653/1255; and by the time Jūzjānī wrote in 658/1260 there are signs of apprehension that the Delhi sultanate would fall under Mongol overlordship. In that very year Balaban, as Maḥmūd Shāh's viceroy, was in diplomatic contact with the qaghan's brother Hülegü, who was in overall command of Mongol forces in Persia. The object and outcome of these negotiations are alike unclear, and it is just at this juncture, regrettably, that Jūzjānī's narrative comes to a halt.

The sultanate undoubtedly owed the reprieve it now obtained not so much to diplomacy as to the disintegration of the Mongol empire. Following Möngke's death in 1259, civil war broke out in the Mongolian homeland. Other members of the dynasty took sides in this struggle, and a secondary conflict erupted between Hülegü, in Persia, and his cousin Berke, who commanded the Mongols of the Golden Horde in the Pontic and Caspian steppes. By the time that Qubilai emerged as undisputed qaghan in the Far East (1264), the empire had splintered into a number of rival khanates: the Ilkhanate, under Hülegü and his descendants in Persia; the khanate of the Golden Horde; the Chaghadayid khanate in Central Asia; and the dominions of Qubilai and his successors in Mongolia and China. The situation was further complicated, first, by the flight of Berke's troops from Persia into Afghanistan (*c.* 660/1262) under a commander called Negüder, who gave his name to a new, independent Mongol grouping; and second, by the emergence in Central Asia in 669/1271 of Ögedei's grandson Qaidu, who headed a confederacy of Mongol princes in opposition to the qaghan until his death in 1303. The empire did not again acknowledge a single head until Qaidu's son Chapar submitted to the qaghan Temür in 1304.

These upheavals enabled Balaban, early in his reign, to reassert the sultan's authority in Sind and to restore the fortifications of Lahore. Mongol pressure on the Punjab was naturally at its greatest when mounted by a major Mongol power drawing on the resources of the whole empire or at least of Central Asia. The Negüderi Mongols (or Qara'unas, as they were also known) did not fall within this category. Although they continued to raid the sultanate annually, they appear to have penetrated no further than Rupar, on the upper Sutlej,[20] or the Multān region, where they did, how ever, succeed in defeating and killing Sultan Balaban's son Muḥammad in 683/1285.

20 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 82: for the corruption in the text here, see S. H. Hodivala, *Studies in Indo Muslim history*, 2 vols. (Bombay, 1939 57), vol. II, pp. 85 6.

From the Khaljīs to the Tughluqids

The ethnic origins of the Khalaj are obscure; although early Arab geographers class them among the Turkish tribes, by the seventh/thirteenth century they were regarded as a separate people, distinct from the Turks.[21] Yet the signifi cance of the so called 'Khaljī revolution' does not lie so much in the transfer of power from a Turkish ruling elite to a non Turkish one. It is true that Jalāl al Dīn promoted to high office several of his numerous kinsfolk and other fellow Khalaj tribesmen, and that in 690/1291 he had to crush a rebellion by Balaban's nephew and supporters of the old dynasty. But Ghiyāthī *amīr*s were by no means excluded from the state apparatus. It was only after the sultan's assassination by his nephew 'Alā' al Dīn (695/1296), the *muqṭa*' of Kara, that a marked change occurred in the composition of the ruling class.

Jalāl al Dīn's youngest son, Rukn al Dīn, was proclaimed sultan in Delhi, but fled to Multān, where he held out with his brothers until the city fell to his cousin's forces (696/1296). 'Alā' al Dīn Muḥammad Shāh (r. 695 715/1296 1316) is said to have brought down the great majority of his uncle's *amīr*s and those who survived from the era of Balaban and Kayqubād. His most trusted servitors were close kinsmen and officers who had formed his entourage at Kara. But the example set by the new sultan was infectious, and during the early years of his reign he was confronted with a number of bids by relatives to murder him and seize the throne; even his brother, Ulugh Khan, was allegedly planning an unauthorised expedition to Tilang at the time of his sudden death.

Under 'Alā' al Dīn Indian slave *amīr*s first appear to have held high military rank, and during the final stage of the reign one of these, the eunuch Kāfūr, attained a position of dominance, persuading the sultan to imprison his son Khiḍr Khan in Gwalior and to nominate as his successor one of his younger sons by the daughter of the Yadava king of Deogir. When 'Alā' al Dīn died, this child was duly enthroned as Shihāb al Dīn 'Umar (r. 715 16/1316) under Kāfūr's tutelage. 'Alā' al Dīn's sons were blinded, with the exception of Quṭb al Dīn, who engineered Kāfūr's murder and himself ascended the throne as Quṭb al Dīn Mubārak Shāh (r. 716 20/1316 20). Quṭb al Dīn was in turn murdered by his Indian favourite Ḥasan, on whom he had conferred the title Khusraw Khan and who now seized the throne. During his brief reign (720/1320), Nāṣir al Dīn Khusraw Shāh the only Indian convert, in fact, ever to become Sultan of

21 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 150, 171 2; C. E. Bosworth and Sir Gerard Clauson, 'Al Xwārazmī on the peoples of Central Asia', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1965), pp. 6, 8; repr. in Bosworth, *The medieval history of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (London, 1977); Aziz Ahmad, 'The early Turkish nucleus in India', *Turcica*, 9 (1977), pp. 99 109.

Delhi had all ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's sons killed. When one of ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's officers, Tughluq, the *muqṭa*ʿ of Dēōlpālpūr, overthrew the usurper with the ostensible aim of avenging his old master's dynasty, he himself was proclaimed sultan as Ghiyāth al Dīn Tughluq Shāh (r. 720 4/1320 4).[22]

Tughluq, who was in all probability an immigrant of Turco Mongol origin from the Qara'una (Negüderi) territories in Afghanistan,[23] came to power with the aid of officers who had served under him on the north western frontier; and men from these regions would play a prominent role in the early years of Tughluqid rule. In 724/1324 the sultan personally intervened in a succession dispute in Muslim Bengal, where Balaban's line had died out earlier in the century,[24] and occupied Sunargaon, installing his own client at Lakhnawti. He died while he was on his way back to Delhi from this campaign later in the year, when a palace that had been erected for his reception at Afghānpūr by his son and heir Ulugh Khan collapsed on him. Ulugh Khan, who now succeeded as Sultan Muḥammad b. Tughluq (r. 724 52/1324 51), is nevertheless exonerated of the charge of parricide by the majority of contem porary sources and of modern historians.

The great Mongol invasions

ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's reign witnessed a sharp escalation in Mongol attacks. From the 1280s the Negüderi territories had been under pressure from the Chaghadayid Mongols of Transoxiana and Turkistān. By *c.* 1295 the Chaghadayid khan Du'a, who was allied with Qaidu, had established his son Qutlugh Qocha as ruler of a large principality south of the Amu darya (Oxus). Qutlugh Qocha and Qaidu's commanders were responsible for a series of major assaults, which penetrated more deeply into northern India than previous attacks. The most formidable occurred during ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's absence from Delhi on campaigns against independent Hindu powers. In *c.* 699/1299f. Qutlugh Qocha in person headed a campaign which almost reached Delhi, although he was wounded and died during the retreat;[25] while in 703/1303 his general Taraghai was able to subject the capital to an investment lasting several weeks.

22 For the probable date of Tughluq's death, usually placed in 725/1325, see Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 330 1.

23 R. C. Jauhri, 'Ghiyāthu'd Dīn Tughluq his original name and descent', in Horst Krüger (ed.), *Kunwar Mohammad Ashraf: An Indian scholar and revolutionary 1905 1962* (Berlin, 1966), pp. 62 6.

24 Abdul Majed Khan, 'The historicity of Ibn Batuta re Shamsuddin Firuz Shah, the so called Balbani king of Bengal', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 18 (1942), pp. 65 70.

25 See Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, p. 222.

After this, the outbreak of civil war in Central Asia between Duʾa and Chapar seriously impaired the Mongols' ability to mount major strikes against India for some time. ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's *amīr*s, notably Tughluq at Dēōpālpūr, were able not only to defeat invading Mongol forces, who may in some cases have been fugitives, but even to take the offensive and launch campaigns beyond the Indus.[26] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa saw an inscription at Multān in which Tughluq laid claim to twenty nine victories over the Mongols.[27]

Muḥammad b. Tughluq began his reign with an expedition to Peshawar, which lay on the very border of the Mongol dominions, and may thereby have provoked a large scale invasion by the Chaghadayid khan, Duʾa's son Tarmashirin, who threatened Delhi and advanced as far as Mīrat (Meerut) before withdrawing beyond the Indus. At one time the historicity of this attack was denied, on the grounds that the standard recension of Baranī's *Tārīkh* makes no reference to it; but it is in fact mentioned not only by another contemporary, ʿIṣāmī, but also in an earlier recension of Baranī's work and by an author writing in the Mamlūk empire, who dates it at the beginning of 730/winter of 1329f.[28] Tarmashirin's attack was to be the last major assault on the sultanate prior to Temür's invasion.

The aims behind the Mongol invasions of India are difficult to assess. Elsewhere in Mongol held territories the traditional aim of world conquest had not been jettisoned, but it is conceivable that in India the hot season acted as a significant deterrent to permanent occupation. For this reason the Mongols had abandoned the siege of Multān in 621/1224,[29] and those whom Jalāl al Dīn Khaljī installed in the vicinity of Delhi in 691/1292 did not remain long because the climate was uncongenial to them.[30] On the other hand, such considerations do not seem to have prevented Mongol notables and their families from settling in India at other times, as during the reigns of Balaban and Kayqubād. The invading Mongol armies in 691/1292 and in *c.* 1306 were

26 According to a document found in Amīr Khusraw, *Rasāʾil al iʿjāz*, lithograph edn, 5 vols. in 2 (Lucknow, 1876), vol. IV, pp. 144 56. See Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 229 30.

27 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, vol. III, p. 202 (trans. Gibb and Beckingham, vol. III, p. 649).

28 Shams al Dīn Muḥammad al Jazarī (d. 739/1338), *Ḥawādith al zamān*, ed. ʿAbd al Salām Tadmurī, 3 vols. (Beirut, AH 1419), vol. III, p. 377; Peter Jackson, 'The Mongols and the Delhi sultanate in the reign of Muḥammad Tughluq (1325 1351)', *Central Asiatic Journal*, 19 (1975), pp. 118 26, and Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, p. 232.

29 ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Aṭā Malik Juwaynī, *Tārīkh i Jahān gushā*, ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazwīnī, 3 vols., Gibb Memorial Series, vol. XVI (Leiden and London, 1912 37), vol. I, p. 112, and trans. J. A. Boyle, *The history of the world conqueror*, 2 vols. (Manchester, 1958, repr. in 1 vol., 1997), vol. I, p. 142.

30 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 219.

certainly accompanied by women and children;[31] and during Muḥammad b. Tughluq's reign Mongol commanders, with their wives and offspring, would winter in the Punjab every year in anticipation of the sultan's largesse.[32] Qutlugh Qocha and Taraghai, at least, were probably intent on the plunder afforded by a wealthy city like Delhi. But other campaigns may have repre sented simply seasonal migrations in search of winter grazing grounds.

The conquest of India

A change of tempo is also visible during ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Khaljī's reign in the context of relations with independent Hindu kingdoms. As *muqṭaʿ* of Kara under Jalāl al Dīn, he had led an audacious raid into the distant Yadava kingdom in the Deccan, sacking its capital, Devagiri (Deogir). Following his accession he launched an expedition against Gujarat (698f./1299f.), which sacked Sōmnāth, Anhilvāra (Patan) and Kanbhāya (Cambay); though the Chaulukyas were not finally overthrown until *c.* 710/1310 and even thereafter Muslim rule was confined to the eastern parts of their kingdom. ʿAlāʾ al Dīn then embarked upon the reduction of Rajasthan and the far south. While the sultan himself captured Ranthanbōr (700/1301) and Chitōr (703/1303), his generals took Sevana and Jālōr (708/1307f.) and overthrew the Paramāra kingdom of Mālwā (705/1305). As a consequence, an inscription of 1309f. in the vicinity of Chandērī could describe the 'Mlecchas' as having overrun the earth in ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's time and strongholds such as Dhār, Mandū, Chandērī and Ērach could be granted out as *iqṭāʿ*s.[33]

The sultan's Indian slave lieutenant, Malik Kāfūr, was especially prominent in campaigns further to the south. His first expedition reduced the Yadava king Rāmadēva to client status (706/1307). Rāmadēva was brought to Delhi and treated with honour by ʿAlāʾ al Dīn, who then sent him back to the Deccan as his subordinate. The value of this relationship was demonstrated in the consid erable assistance that Rāmadēva furnished for Kāfūr's subsequent campaigns; his successor, however, would repudiate Delhi's overlordship, necessitating a fresh campaign by Kāfūr against the Deccan (*c.* 714/1314f.).[34] In further expedi tions Kāfūr exacted tribute from the Kakatiya kingdom of Tilang (709/1309f.) and the Hoysala kingdom of Dvārasamudra (710/1310f.). An assault on the

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 321 2.
32 *Ibid.*, p. 499.
33 Michael D. Willis (ed.), *Inscriptions of Gopakṣetra: Materials for the history of central India* (London, 1996), p. 22; Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 323.
34 Kishori Saran Lal, *A history of the Khaljis AD 1290 1320*, 3rd edn (Delhi, 1980), pp. 255 7.

Pāndya kingdom of Maʿbar (710/1311) secured plunder, though not submission. In the north, meanwhile, by stages that are largely concealed from us, the subjugation of regions like Bundelkhand and Awadh was accelerated.

Expansion into peninsular India continued under ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's successors. Quṭb al Dīn headed a successful expedition against the rebellious Deccan (717/1317), and his favourite Khusraw Khān conducted a wide ranging cam paign against Maʿbar; though the reduction of much of the country seems to have been left until the reign of Ghiyāth al Dīn Tughluq (*c.* 1323) or perhaps that of Muḥammad b. Tughluq (*c.* 1327).[35] It was Muḥammad who, as Ulugh Khān's and his father's heir apparent, had defeated the recalcitrant Kakatiya monarch, Rudradēva II, and asserted direct rule over Tilang (*c.* 721/1321f.). While in pursuit of the rebel Bahāʾ al Dīn Garshāsp in 727/1327, Muḥammad's generals overthrew the kingdom of Kampila and annexed it to the sultanate.

The spectacular expansion of ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's reign rested upon the successful imposition of a system of direct taxation within northern India (see below). But more general circumstances underlying Muslim military superiority need to be taken into consideration. One must have been the sultans' access to a larger supply of good warhorses via the overland route from Central Asia and from the Golden Horde territories in the steppes north of the Black Sea and the Caspian than was available to their Hindu opponents in peninsular India, who were dependent on the seaborne trade in horses from Fārs and the Arabian peninsula. The Delhi sultans' cavalry often outnumbered that of their antagonists, and the readiness of Hindu princes to pay high prices for good quality warhorses was notorious.[36]

The sultans' armies may also have enjoyed an advantage in siege technol ogy. It is widely accepted that the late seventh/thirteenth century witnessed the introduction into the subcontinent of the counterweight trebuchet (*maghribī*) from Muslim regions to the west. This represented a major advance on the older type of catapult (*manjanīq*; *ʿarrāda*), since it was capable of throwing a projectile at least four times as heavy over a distance at least twice as great.[37] The role played by gunpowder is less clear. The Mongols had

35 N. Venkataramanyya, *The early Muslim expansion in south India* (Madras, 1942), pp. 70, 122 5.

36 Simon Digby, *War horse and elephant in the Dehli sultanate: A study of military supplies* (Oxford and Delhi, 1971), pp. 29 32; Ranabir Chakravarti, 'Horse trade and piracy at Tana (Thana, Maharashtra, India): Gleanings from Marco Polo', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 34 (1991), pp. 159 82; André Wink, *Al Hind: The making of the Indo Islamic world*, vol. II: *The slave kings and the Islamic conquest of India, 11th 13th centuries* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 83 7.

37 Jos Gommans, 'Warhorse and gunpowder in India *c.*1000 1850', in Jeremy Black (ed.), *War in the early modern world* (London, 1999), pp. 112 13.

been acquainted with gunpowder since their campaigns of the 1230s in China and had apparently been using it in Persia in the 1250s; and from the very limited evidence found in contemporary Indo Muslim sources a case has been made for the introduction of gunpowder based devices into northern India before 1300, perhaps through the agency of Mongol renegades.[38]

Administrative developments under ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn and his successors

Both the successful resistance to major Mongol attacks during ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's era and the pronounced territorial expansion over which he presided were made possible by administrative measures which, in the first place, greatly extended the area under the sultan's direct control and subjected it to a uniform system of land tax. Unlike the *kharāj* previously levied, which was simply tribute by another name, that imposed by ʿAlāʾ al Dīn was a percentage of the value of the crop or, in some regions, of the crop itself, required on the basis of measurement and at the time of the harvest (*bar sar i kisht*). The rate was 50 per cent, the maximum permitted by the Ḥanafī school which was dominant in the sultanate. Baranī, who is our principal source for these measures, presents them at one point as an expedient designed to bring low the rural Hindu chiefs, an aim with which he himself was stridently in sympathy.[39] But he also makes it clear that the impulse behind them was militaristic[40] to enable the sultan to raise considerably larger armies, in order, presumably, both to repel the Mongols (see below) and to conquer the Hindu kingdoms of central and southern India. It is a measure of the government's enhanced effectiveness that the land tax proper could be levied in both newly conquered Jhāyin (near Ranthanbōr) and in Kābar (in the hitherto turbulent territory of Katehr).

The second arm of ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's policy was the enforcement of low prices and wages in Delhi and its environs and possibly in some other regions also. Doubt has been expressed regarding the reliability of the data supplied by Baranī, who is our principal source for these measures; but Irfan Habib has

38 Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'The role of the Mongols in the introduction of gunpowder and firearms in South Asia', in Brenda J. Buchanan (ed.), *Gunpowder: The history of an international technology* (Bath, 1996), pp. 33 44; Khan, 'The coming of gunpowder to the Islamic world and north India: Spotlight on the role of the Mongols', *Journal of Asian History*, 30 (1996), pp. 27 45; Khan, *Gunpowder and firearms: Warfare in medieval India* (Oxford and Delhi, 2004), pp. 17 40 *passim*.

39 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 287 8.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 323 4.

shown both that they were intimately linked with the taxation policy and that Baranī's material is corroborated by other authors.[41] The chief priority was that prices for grain and other foodstuffs should be kept at a level which would enable the sultan to pay his troops at a fixed and relatively modest rate.

We are told that ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's price control measures did not survive him.[42] But the growth of centralised control at the expense of the sultan's represen tatives in the provinces undoubtedly continued after his death. Although under Ghiyāth al Dīn Tughluq the *muqṭaʿ* still had access to that portion of the *iqṭāʿ* revenue which was earmarked for the stipends of his troops, a further erosion of the *muqṭaʿ*'s rights occurred during the reign of his son and successor. We know from an external observer that there was now a direct link between the revenue department and the ordinary trooper, that is, that the allocation to the *muqṭaʿ* of the funds to pay his troops, and hence his capacity to bind them to his own interests, had ceased.[43] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa reveals that within the province of Amroha, for instance, there was now ensconced, alongside the military commander, a financial officer (*wālī al kharāj*) answer able directly to the sultan.[44] It has been plausibly suggested that this encroach ment may have fostered the discontent among the military class that characterised the latter years of Muḥammad's reign.[45]

The reigns of Muḥammad b. Tughluq and Fīrūz Shāh

At the accession of Muḥammad b. Tughluq (r. 724 52/1324 51), the Delhi sulta nate embraced a larger area than at any time previously. The sultan's reputation as a formidable holy warrior and victor over the Mongols reached Persia and Mamlūk Egypt,[46] and according to Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited India during Muḥammad's reign, even the rulers of the Maldives feared him.[47] He seems to

41 See Irfan Habib, 'The price regulations of ʿAlāʾuddīn Khaljī a defence of Ẓiāʾ Baranī', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 21 (1984), pp. 393 414.

42 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 383 6.

43 Ibn Faḍl allāh al ʿUmarī (d. 749/1348), *Masālik al abṣār fī mamālik al amṣār*, partial edn by Otto Spies, *Ibn Faḍlallāh al ʿOmarī's Bericht über Indien* (Leipzig, 1943), Arabic text p. 13 (German trans. pp. 37 8), and trans. I. H. Siddiqi and Q. M. Ahmad, *A fourteenth century Arab account of India under Sultan Muḥammad bin Tughlaq* (Aligarh, 1975), pp. 37 8.

44 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, vol. III, pp. 436, 439 (trans. Gibb and Beckingham, vol. III, pp. 762, 763).

45 Habib, 'Agrarian economy', pp. 72 3.

46 Shabānkāraʾī, *Majmaʿ al ansāb*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddith (Tehran, AH 1363 solar), pp. 87 8, 287; Ibn Faḍl allāh al ʿUmarī ed. Spies, p. 29 (German trans., p. 55); trans. Siddiqi and Ahmad, p. 54; partial edn by Klaus Lech, *Das mongolische Weltreich*, Asiatische Forschungen, 22 (Wiesbaden, 1968), Arabic text p. 40 (German trans., p. 118).

47 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, vol. IV, p. 158 (trans. Gibb and Beckingham, vol. IV, p. 843).

have been a man of boundless ambition. Baranī, who for seventeen years was a member of his entourage, asserts that the sultan would not tolerate a single island or closet remaining outside his authority.[48] The same author pays tribute to the efficiency of the revenue department, during Muḥammad's early years, in levying the *kharāj* from an unprecedented number of far flung provinces.[49]

The successive crises which afflicted the sultanate under Muḥammad were accordingly all the more perplexing. Here we should bear in mind two circumstances. In the first place, the recent imposition of direct rule over so much of the south entailed both the forfeiture of plunder and new fiscal commitments in terms of maintaining garrisons and a civil administration in formerly enemy territory. And second, in the 1330s the Ilkhanate and the Chaghadayid khanate in Central Asia entered upon a period of upheaval, while the Egyptian Mamlūk sultanate underwent a series of monetary crises. We cannot dismiss the possibility, therefore, that in Muḥammad's time the sultanate and its neighbours and major trading partners were engulfed in a common economic turbulence.

Baranī, however, blames the upheavals on the sultan's own policies: the establishment of Dawlatābād (Deogir), in the Deccan, as the second capital; the so called 'Khurāsān project'; a sharp increase in the government's revenue demand from the Dūāb cultivators; and the introduction of a 'token' currency.[50] It will be argued here that these various measures were closely linked and that they were by no means as chimerical as Baranī claimed.

Baranī provides inconsistent definitions of the region of 'Khurāsān', which Muḥammad planned to invade, and has thereby misled modern historians. It is clear that the expedition was directed against the old enemy, the Mongol Chaghadayid khanate in Transoxiana and present day Afghanistan; indeed, at one point Baranī specifies that Mā Warā' al Nahr (Transoxiana) was the target. A large force set at 475,000 in an earlier recension of Baranī's work and at 370,000 in the standard text was mustered specifically for the purpose, but had to be disbanded owing to a lack of money to pay the troops in the second year. In an attempt to keep the troops in training and doubtless also for the sake of plunder, a part of this army was despatched into an unspecified region of the sub Himalaya (termed Qarāchīl in our sources), but with disastrous consequences.

From this point onward, the sultan and the Chaghadayid rulers seem to have been on amicable terms. Muḥammad is said to have corresponded with

48 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 458.
49 *Ibid.*, pp. 468 9.
50 *Ibid.*, p. 471.

Tarmashirin, whose offspring took refuge with him after their father's over throw and death in 735/1334f., and subsequently played host to a fresh wave of Mongol notables and their followers during the upheavals that convulsed the Chaghadayid polity. He jettisoned military confrontation with the Mongols in favour of using the vast patronage at his disposal to win over individuals and groups.[51] By his last years, he was on friendly terms with the *amīr* Qazaghan, the effective ruler of the western Chaghadayid khanate in Transoxiana, who was of Qara'una origin (as Muḥammad's own dynasty may have been): Qazaghan would furnish him with a body of Mongol auxiliaries for his final campaign in Sind in *c.* 751/1350.

Closely connected with the Khurāsān expedition was the establishment of a second capital at Dawlatābād; and one author hints that they coincided.[52] The broader impulse behind the choice of Deogir seems to have been twofold: to implant Islam more securely in the newly conquered Deccan province and to create a more suitably situated administrative centre for the greatly extended sultanate. But the nature and timing of the project, which was launched in 727/1326f., have been obscured. The aim was not to abandon Delhi com pletely. It was the principal residents only of the old city of Delhi (the *Qilʿa yi Rāī Pithūrā*, i.e. the city of Prthviraja, captured by Aybak in 589/1193) and their households who were moved south. The newer 'cities' in the Delhi complex, like Sīrī, Hazār Sutūn and Tughluqābād, were not affected; at this very time Muḥammad was engaged in ambitious construction projects in the region, including a new fortress, ʿĀdilābād, near Tughluqābād, and a wall that linked the old city of Delhi with Sīrī to enclose an area henceforward known as Jahānpanāh.[53] And Baranī's statement that the *amīr*s and maliks and their troops were with the sultan in Delhi while their families were in Dawlatābād shows that Muḥammad was turning the old city into a vast military encampment.[54]

The increase in taxation in the Dūāb was also intimately linked with the needs of the enormous 'Khurāsān' force. Baranī, again, has helped to confuse the question by using the phrase *yakī ba dah wa yakī ba bīst* ('tenfold and

51 *Ibid.*, first recension, Bodleian ms. Elliot 353, fo. 199b; Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 233 5.
52 Mīr i Khwurd, *Siyar al awliyā'*, lithograph edn (Delhi, AH 1302), p. 271.
53 H. Waddington, '"Ādilābād: A part of the "fourth" Delhi', *Ancient India*, 1 (1946), pp. 60 76; A. Welch and H. Crane, 'The Tughluqs: Master builders of the Delhi sultanate', *Muqarnas*, 1 (1983), pp. 128 9.
54 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 479; Peter Jackson, 'Delhi: The problem of a vast military encampment', in R. E. Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi through the ages: Essays in urban history, culture and society* (Oxford and Delhi, 1986), pp. 24 6, and Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 258 60.

twenty fold') for the rise. Any enhancement in the revenue demand, following so swiftly on Tarmashirin's devastation of the province, would have caused unrest. But if we piece together the scraps of information in our sources, it seems that the *kharāj* was now demanded partly in cash, that the basis of assessment was a standard (and not the actual) yield, that the value of the crop was calculated according to decreed (and not current) prices and that a number of other taxes were simultaneously imposed on them.[55] The culti vators were being required to pay, as well as provision, the unprecedentedly large army that Muḥammad had amassed. That the remuneration of the troops placed a strain on the sultan's finances is also clear from other evidence: the abandonment of ʿAlāʾ al Dīn's system, with a partial reversion to the assignment of *iqṭāʿ*s to pay the troops;[56] and the issue of a low denomination currency from 730/1329f. onwards. This latter measure, like the reduction of the silver content of the *tanga* since 727/1326f., was designed to remedy an acute shortage of silver in the Delhi sultanate.[57]

The reign appears to be dominated by revolts. The two earliest (727 8/ 1326f.) those of Küshlü Khān, governor of Sind, and Bahāʾ al Dīn Garshāsp, governor of Sāgar in the Deccan were the work of men closely associated with Tughluq's seizure of power in 720/1320, and were seemingly sparked off by the Dawlatābād project. Küshlü Khan was allegedly stung into rebellion by the arrogance of an officer sent to oversee the transfer of his family to the south, and Garshāsp may have been concerned about the establishment of a new bastion of central power so close to his own territory. Both were crushed, as was an insurrection by Ghiyāth al Dīn Bahādur Būra, a scion of the former ruling dynasty in Bengal, in 730/1329f.

The revolt of the Dūāb cultivators, which lasted from 732/1331f. to 734/1333f. and necessitated campaigns by Muḥammad in person to suppress it, served to ignite a series of further risings throughout the sultanate as Muslim *amīr*s and Hindu chiefs alike sought to profit from the sultan's embarrassments, and thus led to the permanent loss of a number of distant territories. In the far south, Maʿbar seceded (734/1334) under an officer who assumed the title of Sultan Jalāl al Dīn Aḥsan Shāh. In 735/1334f. Muḥammad led an army south to recover the province, but was obliged to retreat by the outbreak of an epidemic which severely reduced the number of troops under his command. This crisis

55 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 473, 479; also first recension, Bodleian ms. Elliot 353, fo. 192b; Sirhindī, pp. 101 2; Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, pp. 262 3.
56 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, pp. 476 7.
57 Simon Digby, 'The currency system', in Raychaudhuri and Habib (eds.), *Cambridge economic history of India*, vol. I, pp. 97 8.

sparked off further revolts. Two Hindu chiefs formerly in the sultan's service established the new state of Vijayanagara with its nucleus in Kampila, and another Hindu warlord seized power in Tilang (*c.* 736/1335f.). In the same year, a rebel named Fakhr al Dīn ('Fakhrā') seized control in Bengal following the assassination of Muḥammad's governor. When fresh troops failed to arrive from Delhi, a loyal officer named ʿAlī Mubārak himself assumed the title of sultan at Lakhnawti in opposition to Fakhrā. From *c.* 743/1342f. both men were confronted by a third claimant, Shams al Dīn Ilyās Shāh, who would emerge victorious by the early 1350s.[58]

The secession of these provinces prompted Muḥammad to make greater demands on the territories he still controlled, and this in turn provoked further risings by Muslim officers, probably *c.* 740/1339f. Niẓām Māʾin and Nuṣrat Khān, who had farmed the revenues at Kara and at Bidar respectively, both rebelled when they were unable to amass the enormous sums which they had contracted to raise. ʿAyn al Mulk Ibn Māhrū, the governor of Awadh, rebelled under the false impression that Muḥammad planned his recall and execution. There is also evidence that resentment against the sultan's pagan Hindu servitors underlay some insurrections, such as that in Sīvistān (Sehvan) in *c.* 742/1341f., when a Hindu officer whom Ibn Baṭṭūṭa calls Ratan was killed, and that of ʿAlī Shāh Kar ('the Deaf') in Bidar slightly later, when the chief victim was a Hindu tax farmer named Bhiran.[59] These revolts were all suppressed.

The sultan, whose relations with many representatives of the religious class, especially the Chishtiyya, were strained, seems to have tried to win their support by securing confirmation of his title from the puppet ʿAbbāsid caliph maintained by the Mamlūk sultans at Cairo. He was the first Delhi ruler to win caliphal recognition, in all likelihood, since Raḍiyya and certainly since the sack of Baghdad in 656/1258; the arrival of an official envoy with a diploma in 745/1344f. was attended by considerable ceremony. At this point Muḥammad still retained the allegiance of the great majority of the military class, but in 745/1344f. new revenue raising arrangements for the Deccan and for Gujarat met with determined opposition from the *amīrān i ṣada* ('*amīr*s of a hundred') in the two provinces. Muḥammad defeated the Gujarat rebels and then moved to Dawlatābād, where he was again victorious. But on his

58 A. H. Dani, 'Shamsuddīn Ilyās Shāh, Shāh i Bangālah', in H. R. Gupta *et al.* (eds), *Essays presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar*, 2 vols. (Hoshiarpur, 1958), vol. II, p. 55.

59 K. A. Nizami, 'Sultan Muḥammad bin Tughluq (1324 51)', in M. Habib and K. A. Nizami, *A comprehensive history of India*, vol. V: *The Delhi sultanat AD 1206 1526* (New Delhi, 1970), p. 565.

withdrawal to deal with a fresh rising in Gujarat by his Turkish *ghulām*, Taghai, insurrection flared up in the Deccan once more, and in Rabīʿ II 748/August 1347 the province seceded under Ḥasan Gangū, the founder of the Bahmani dynasty (748 933/1347 1527). The sultan died on the banks of the Indus on 21 Muḥarram 752/20 March 1351 after spending his last three years in Gujarat and Sind in a vain attempt to eliminate Taghai, who was not killed until a few weeks later.[60] The sultanate now wielded no authority south of the Narbada river.

Muḥammad's cousin Fīrūz Shāh (r. 752 90/1351 88), who was proclaimed sultan by the army commanders in Sind, had first to deal with a mutiny by Mongol detachments which had formed part of the late ruler's army. Then he advanced slowly on Delhi, where a faction centred on the vizier, Khwāja Jahān, had enthroned an alleged infant son of Muḥammad. The opposition melted away, and although Khwāja Jahān submitted he was shortly put to death at the instigation of the *amīr*s. A later conspiracy to replace Fīrūz Shāh with Muḥammad's sister's son came to nothing. The legitimacy of the regime was boosted by the arrival of successive embassies from the ʿAbbāsid caliph at Cairo from 754/1353 onwards, bringing diplomas that recognised Fīrūz Shāh as the only Muslim ruler in the subcontinent and indeed over a still wider area that included Sarandib (Sri Lanka), the Maldives, Java and Sumatra.

In military terms, Fīrūz Shāh's reign was undistinguished. The sultan declined an invitation from elements in Maʿbar to intervene there, and the shortlived sultanate of Maʿbar would be snuffed out by Vijāyanagara in 779/1377f. Fīrūz Shāh also abandoned a projected expedition against the Bahmani regime at Dawlatābād. Two attacks on Bengal, the first against Ilyās Shāh (754/1353) and the second against his son Sikandar Shāh (760/1359), achieved little more than the acquisition of elephants and other items of tribute; Bengal would remain independent until the tenth/sixteenth century. Of the two expeditions which the sultan headed into Sind in the late 1360s with the purpose of avenging Muḥammad's humiliation, the first failed and the second was hardly more effective. His most successful campaign, against the fortress of Nagarkōt (*c.* 766/1365), resulted in the submission of its raja; the region would serve as a base for his son Muḥammad in the civil wars that followed the old sultan's death.

In order to prevent a repetition of the unrest that had plagued his cousin's reign, the new sultan made concessions to the *amīr*s, the military class and even the cultivators. *Iqṭā*ʿs, including the smallest assignments made to

60 *Sīrat i Fīrūzshāhī*, School of Oriental and African Studies ms. 283116, pp. 19, 27 8.

individual troopers, and administrative posts were made hereditary. In *c.* 759/1358 the revenue demand for the whole empire was fixed at 67,500,000 *tangas* for the duration of the reign. Fīrūz Shāh, a man of undoubted if conventional piety, also made efforts to retain the support of the religious class, abolishing the uncanonical taxes imposed by Muḥammad and setting aside a total of 3,600,000 *tangas* for *ʿulamāʾ*, shaykhs and other holy men. In strictly political terms, these measures appear to have paid off. We know of only one revolt during the reign, that of Shams al Dīn Dāmghānī in Gujarat (782/1380f.), which was put down by the local *amīrān i ṣada*. It is clear, nevertheless, that such tranquillity was achieved at a price. The policy of hereditary *iqṭāʿ*s risked the creation of autonomous principalities in an era of lesser security; and at the fiscal level, the government failed to benefit from a general increase in agricultural production, to which, incidentally, Fīrūz Shāh's own measures to extend cultivation had contributed. The military con sequences of this decline in the government's resources, accentuated by a decade of internecine strife, would become evident when Temür attacked Delhi in 801/1398.

Hindu–Muslim relations within the Delhi sultanate

The era of the Delhi sultanate witnessed the first implantation of Islam within a vast region lying east and south east of the Indus Valley. The sultans' attitudes towards 'Hinduism', their treatment of their non Muslim subjects, and the way in which those subjects viewed Islam and Muslim rulers, are accordingly matters of some moment; but discussion of these issues has been bedevilled by preconceptions born of modern communal ism. Admittedly, literary sources such as the voluminous works of Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī (d. 726/1325) furnish numerous examples of opprobrious comment about 'Saturnian' or 'crow faced' Hindus.[61] Yet it is clear that beneath such polemic lay a substratum of everyday intercourse between Hindus and Muslims. Muḥammad b. Tughluq, who gained a reputation for fraternising with Hindus,[62] was possibly only the most eminent Muslim figure to take part in Hindu festivities. And against epigraphical evidence that denounces the barbarian (*mleccha*) Muslim invaders and celebrates their defeat at the hands of Hindu kings must be set those Sanskrit inscriptions which, like the Palam Baoli inscription of 1276, simply locate the Muslim

61 Annemarie Schimmel, 'Turk and Hindu: A poetical image and its application to historical fact', in Speros J. Vryonis, Jr (ed.), *Islam and cultural change in the Middle Ages* (Wiesbaden, 1975), pp. 107 26.

62 ʿIṣāmī, *Futūḥ al salāṭīn*, p. 515.

sultans within a sequence of ruling dynasties and utilise the symbolism and motifs of an earlier era to depict their rule.[63] Even in the far south, where the sultans' faith was rejected along with their sovereignty, the culture and titulature of the court of Vijayanagara retained the imprint of several years' subjection to the Delhi sultanate.[64]

The complexity of the relations between the sultans and their Hindu subjects can be illustrated with reference to two questions: the fate of Hindu religious establishments and the imposition of the *jizya* (the Islamic poll tax). Muslim conquerors and rulers have often been charged with the wholesale desecration or destruction of Hindu temples, and hence with fanatical hostility towards Hinduism. Admittedly, whatever doubts attach to the claims of the early seventh/thirteenth century author Ḥasan i Niẓāmī that Aybak uprooted 'idolatry' and destroyed idol temples in a number of centres (including a thousand in Varanasi), architectural remains endorse his state ment that the materials from demolished temples were incorporated in newly constructed mosques, as for instance in the Quṭb Minār at Delhi and the Arhai Din ke Jhompra mosque at Ajmer.[65] But recent research suggests that such actions sprang less from Muslim iconoclasm than from an awareness of Indian political tradition. That is to say, Muslim rulers were actuated by precisely the same considerations as were the plundering attacks by Hindu kings on temples in the territories of their Hindu rivals namely, further to undermine the legitimacy of the defeated sovereign by severing the intimate link between his authority and the religious complex over which he presided.[66] Moreover, the situation in the immediate wake of the Muslim conquest and the impact of Muslim rule, once established, might well differ sharply. In much the same way as Hindu kings had patronised Muslim mosques within their dominions,

63 Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *Representing the Other? Sanskrit sources and the Muslims (eighth to fourteenth century)* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 48 54. But cf. Peter Hardy, 'The authority of mediaeval Muslim kings in South Asia', in Marc Gaborieau (ed.), *Islam et société en Asie du Sud*, Collection Puruṣārthe, 9 (Paris, 1986), p. 39.

64 Philip B. Wagoner, '"Sultan among Hindu kings": Dress, titles, the Islamicization of Hindu culture at Vijayanagara', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 55 (1996), pp. 851 80; also Wagoner, 'Harihara, Bukka, and the sultan: The Delhi sultanate in the political imagination of Vijayanagara', in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking religious identities in Islamicate South Asia* (Gainesville, FL, 2000), pp. 300 26.

65 Ḥasan i Niẓāmī, *Tāj al ma'āthir*, India Office ms. 15 (Ethé, *Catalogue*, no. 10), fos. 53a, 74b, 134b, 185a; Robert Hillenbrand, 'Political symbolism in early Indo Islamic mosque architecture: The case of Ajmīr', *Iran*, 26 (1988), pp. 105 17.

66 Richard M. Eaton, 'Temple desecration and Indo Muslim states', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 11 (2000), pp. 293 302; repr. in Gilmartin and Lawrence (eds.), *Beyond Turk and Hindu*, pp. 254 60.

and continued to do so even when under attack from Delhi, the sultans and their officers can also be found extending their protection, and donating funds, to Hindu (or Jain) religious establishments.[67] Of the numerous documents conferring land and tax exemptions on Brahmans, Jains, jogis and Parsis, issued by the Mughal emperors or by the rulers of the successor states to the Delhi sultanate, some clearly represent the renewal or extension of grants made in the sultanate period.[68]

The Muslim legal texts which enjoyed authority throughout the wider Islamic world make no mention of Hindus among the *dhimmīs* ('protected peoples'), those non Muslims who were liable to pay the *jizya* (a graduated poll tax); although an obscure reference in the Qurʾān to a people called the 'Sabians' had enabled the early Arab conquerors to admit Zoroastrians to *dhimmī* status. By the eighth/fourteenth century a good many Indo Muslim authors and one legal text composed within the sultanate, the *Fatāwā yi Fīrūzshāhī*, were prepared to refer to the sultan's Hindu subjects as *dhimmīs*. Kūfī's *Chach nāma* (*c*. 613/1216f.), which purports to be a Persian translation of an earlier (lost) work in Arabic, speaks of the levying of the *jizya* on the conquered population of Sind at the time of the Muslim conquest in the early second/eighth century. This is quite anachronistic, and it has been suggested that this kind of statement was used to justify what had become standard practice in Sind by the time the *Chach nāma* was written.[69] References to seventh/thirteenth century conditions in India seem to show the term *jizya* (sometimes *kharāj wa jizya*) being used of the tribute rendered by Hindu potentates. The occasional allusion by Baranī raises the slight possibility that the poll tax was levied on the Hindu populace within Muslim held towns in northern India.[70] But the earliest incontrovertible evidence for the imposi tion of the *jizya* as a discriminatory tax on individual non Muslims dates from the reign of the Tughluqid Fīrūz Shāh; though it is difficult, even so, to see how the measure could have been enforced outside the principal urban centres.

67 Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal garden: Mysticism, history and politics at a South Asian Sufi center* (Albany, NY, 1992), pp. 32 3, 48 50; Eaton, 'Temple desecration', pp. 302 3 (and in Gilmartin and Lawrence, p. 261).

68 B. N. Goswamy and J. S. Grewal (eds.), *The Mughals and the Jogis of Jakhbar* (Simla, 1967), pp. 20 1. For the Lodī period, see also Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, 'Wajh i Maʿash grants under the Afghan kings (1451 1555)', *Medieval India: A miscellany*, 2 (1972), pp. 36 7.

69 Peter Hardy, 'Is the *Chach nama* intelligible to the historian as political theory?', in Hamida Khuhro (ed.), *Sind through the centuries* (Oxford and Karachi, 1981), pp. 116 17.

70 Baranī, *Tārīkh i Fīrūzshāhī*, p. 217; Baranī, *Fatāwā yi Jahāndārī*, ed. Afsar Saleem Khan (Lahore, 1972), p. 167.

The civil wars and Temür's invasion

During his last years Fīrūz Shāh had associated with him first his youngest son Muḥammad Shāh and then Tughluq Shāh, the son of his grandson Fatḥ Khan who, after enjoying quasi sovereign status in the empire in the 1350s and early 1360s, had died in 778/1376.[71] Tughluq Shāh II (r. 790 1/1388 9), who duly succeeded his great grandfather, was able to hold off Muḥammad, but was himself murdered by a cousin, Abū Bakr Shāh (r. 791 2/1389 90). There now ensued a duel for the throne between Muḥammad, who commanded the support of the majority of the provincial governors, and Abū Bakr, who was based in Fīrūz Shāh's new residence of Firūzābād and backed by the old sultan's numerous slaves. It was only when a significant number of these slave officers, for unknown reasons, transferred their allegiance to Muḥammad that Abū Bakr was expelled from the Delhi complex, enabling his rival to enter the capital and to order the execution of all the Fīrūzshāhī slaves in the opposition party. Abū Bakr was subsequently captured (793/1390f.) and died in captivity in Meerut.

Muḥammad's triumph was a hollow one. He was able to replace the rebellious governor of Gujarat (793/1391), but otherwise his brief reign was spent endeavouring to enforce obedience on Hindu princes rather closer to the capital, notably the *muqaddam*s of Gwalior and Etāwa, and Bahādur Nāhir, the chief of the Meos (Mīwāt) immediately south west of Delhi, who had been a steady adherent of Tughluq Shāh and Abū Bakr Shāh. Muḥammad was preparing a campaign to suppress Shaykhā, the Khokhar chief, who had rebelled and occupied Lahore, when he died in 796/1394; his son and succes sor, Humāyūn Shāh, followed him to the grave a month later. Another son of Muḥammad, the ten year old Maḥmūd Shāh (r. 796 815/1394 1412), was there upon proclaimed sultan.

The new reign began auspiciously, when Sārang Khān, the newly appointed governor of Dēōlpālpūr, dislodged Shaykhā from Lahore, while the vizier Khwāja Jahān Sarwar was given the title of *malik al sharq* and entrusted with the government of an enormous tract extending from the Dūāb to Bihār, with its centre at Jawnpur. But antipathy between the principal *amīr*s at court, Muqarrab Khān, the sultan's deputy, and Saʿādat Khān, the *bārbek* (military chamberlain) and a former slave of Muḥammad Shāh, and the

71 For coins in Fatḥ Khān's name, see H. Nelson Wright, *The coinage and metrology of the Sulṭāns of Dehlī* (Delhi, 1936; repr. New Delhi, 1974), pp. 186 8; and for the precise genealogy of these princes, Jackson, *Delhi sultanate*, p. 332.

intrigues of Mallū Khān, Sārang Khān's brother, paralysed the regime. Saʿādat Khan was ousted and retaliated by proclaiming as sultan at Firūzābād Nuṣrat Shāh, a brother of Tughluq Shāh II (797/1394f.). Saʿādat Khan shortly fled from Firūzābād to Delhi, where Muqarrab Khan put him to death; but the opposition centred on the person of Nuṣrat Shāh continued. The forces of the two sultans Nuṣrat Shāh commanding the allegiance of the districts between the Dūāb, Sambhal, Pānīpat and Rohtak, while Maḥmūd Shāh was acknowledged in Delhi and Sīrī fought numerous engagements but were unable to dislodge each other from their respective power bases. This was the situation when the Central Asian conqueror Temür 'the Lame' (*Timür i lang*, 'Tamerlane') invaded northern India.

The turbulence that afflicted the Chaghadayid khanate from Tarmashirin's reign onwards had lasted for over a quarter of a century, and had led to its division into a western khanate, centred on Transoxiana, and an eastern, embracing the more nomadic lands and known as Mughulistān. Although the Punjab and Sind suffered minor forays early in the reign of Fīrūz Shāh, these are likely to have been the work of small groups of fugitives dislodged from Transoxiana in the struggles that followed Qazaghan's death in 759/1358 and preceded the rise of Temür in the late 1360s. Once he had become from 771/1369f. *de facto* master of the western khanate, which he ruled through a puppet khan of Ögedei's line, Temür embarked on a career of conquest that pitted him against the khans of the Golden Horde, the various local princes who had taken over the lands of the Ilkhanate in Persia, and the Delhi sultanate, so frequently invaded by Chaghadayid armies in the past.

One source alleges that Temür and Fīrūz Shāh had corresponded, and that Muḥammad Shāh, during his struggle with Abū Bakr Shāh in 792/1390, had set out for Samarqand to seek Temür's assistance when he was summoned to Delhi to take the throne.[72] Temür himself claimed that as a good Muslim he was impelled by the duty to punish the rulers of Delhi for having allowed such latitude to their pagan Hindu subjects; though as it transpired the victims of his Indian campaign would be overwhelmingly Muslims. In any case, Temür needed no pretext for attacking India. His military operations were ostensibly designed to recreate the world empire of Chinggis Khan, who had entered India briefly in *c.* 1223.

Temür's advance forces, commanded by his grandson Pīr Muḥammad, who governed Kabul, took Multān in 800/1397. Temür himself moved

72 Muḥammad Bihāmadkhānī, *Tārīkh i Muḥammadī*, British Library ms. Or. 137, fos. 422b 423a, 442b; trans. M. Zaki (Aligarh, 1972), pp. 32, 59 60.

through Multān and the Punjab by way of the Ghaggar river, to do battle with Sultan Maḥmūd Shāh and Mallū Khan in the plain outside Delhi on 7 Rabīʿ II 801/16 December 1398. Despite a spirited resistance, the Delhi army was routed; Mallū and the sultan fled, and the Chaghadayid forces plundered the city for several days. The rival sultan, Nuṣrat Shāh, abandoned Firūzābād for the Dūāb, where the conqueror soon followed him. After storming Meerut, however, Temür began a gradual withdrawal westwards across the Indus. His triumph can be attributed to the fact that he had welded the Chaghadayid nomads into a formidable military machine and drew, in addition, on con tingents supplied by client rulers beyond the Chaghadayid boundaries. Nevertheless, the weakness of the opposition must also be taken into account. Against the invaders Mallū and the sultan had been able to muster only 10,000 horse, 20,000 foot and 120 elephants,[73] a pitiful force compared with those available to ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Khaljī, to Muḥammad b. Tughluq or even to Fīrūz Shāh.

The truncated sultanate

While Mallū re established himself in Sīrī, where he was rejoined after a time by Maḥmūd Shāh, and brought back under control the Dūāb and the environs (*ḥawālī*) of the capital, what remained of the Delhi sultanate underwent an irrevocable fragmentation. Autonomous states emerged under Khiḍr Khan in Multān, Ẓafar Khan Wajīh al Mulk in Gujarat, ʿAmīd Shāh (Dilāwar Khan) in Mālwā, Shams Khan Awhadī in Bhayāna, Khwāja Jahān Sarwar in Jawnpur and Maḥmūd Khan b. Fīrūz Khan in Kalpī. It should be noticed that all these rulers except the last had been nominees and supporters of Muḥammad Shāh (r. 792 6/1390 4); and even Maḥmūd Khan of Kalpī, whose father had been vizier to Tughluq Shāh II, had submitted to Muḥammad after Abū Bakr's downfall and received an increase in his territory. All, again with one exception, were slow to declare their independence of Delhi and appear to have done so only after Temür's attack. The exception was Khiḍr Khan, who, expelled from Multān by Sārang Khan, had thrown in his lot with Temür and had been reinstated in the city as his lieutenant. It was Khiḍr Khan who defeated and killed Mallū Khan in 808/1405f. Maḥmūd Shāh maintained a shadowy authority

73 Ghiyāth al Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Rūz nāma yi ghazawāt i Hindūstān*, trans. A. A. Semenov, *Dnevnik pokhoda Timura v Indiiu* (Moscow, 1958), p. 115; Niẓām i Shāmī, *Ẓafar nāma*, ed. Felix Tauer, *Histoire des conquêtes de Tamerlan*, 2 vols., Monografie Archivu Orientálního, 5 (Prague, 1937 56), vol. I, p. 189.

in Delhi until his death in 815/1412; then, following the brief reign of the *amīr* Dawlat Khān, Khiḍr Khan occupied the capital (817/1414).

Under Khiḍr Khān's dynasty known, in view of their alleged descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, as the Sayyids (817 55/1414 51) the sultanate had shrunk to being just one of a number of competing principalities in the north. Khiḍr Khan (r. 817 24/1414 21) at no point assumed the title of sultan, but contented himself with the style of *rāyat i aʿlā* ('exalted standard'). He, his son Mubārak Shāh (r. 824 37/1421 34) and the latter's nephew Muḥammad Shāh (r. 837 49/ 1434 45) acknowledged the sovereignty of Temür's son, Shāh Rukh (d. 850/1447), who ruled in Herat, though this did not afford them security against further attacks by that monarch's kinsmen and lieutenants in Kabul.[74] The Sayyid rulers' own military energies were absorbed in attempts to extract the land revenue from the Meos, the Dūāb, Katehr, Etawa and Gwalior and by the need to defend their territories against threats from the sultanates of Mālwā, Gujarat and, especially, Jawnpur. In the west, Multān, Khiḍr Khān's old base, seceded under the dynasty of a local shaykh (847/1443). In the east, Jawnpur denied the sultanate access both to important sources of elephants and to some of the most fertile of its former territories. A historian writing in the Mughal era immortalised a contemporary ditty that saluted the last Sayyid, ʿAlāʾ al Dīn ʿĀlam Shāh (*shāh i ʿālam*, 'world king'), as ruler only from Delhi as far as Pālam.[75]

Afghan immigrants, who had first attained prominence among the *amīr*s during the Khaljī era, formed a high proportion of the nobility and the military officers under the Sayyids, and in 855/1451 one of their chiefs, Bahlūl Lodī, displaced the feeble ʿĀlam Shāh and ascended the throne. Under the Lodī dynasty (855 932/1451 1526) the sultanate enjoyed something of a renaissance. Bahlūl (r. 855 94/1451 89) conquered the sultanate of Jawnpur (884/1479). His son and successor, Sikandar (r. 894 923/1489 1517), reduced Bihār and Nagaur, terminated Awhadī rule in Bhayāna (898/1492f.) and recovered territory both from the Hindu ruler of Gwalior and from the Muslim sultan of Mālwa. It is a measure of his preoccupation with his southern frontiers that in 911/1505 he transferred his capital from Delhi to Agra.

Afghan immigration continued apace under the Lodīs, and although Bahlūl had been content to be simply *primus inter pares*, his successors were con cerned to impose their will upon the Afghan chiefs. Sikandar achieved this by

74 Ḥāfiẓ i Abrū, *Zubdat al tawārīkh*, ed. Sayyid Kamāl Ḥāj Sayyid Jawādī, 2 vols. (Tehran, AH solar 1372), vol. II, pp. 408 9, 641 2, 680 1, 755, 798 9.

75 Aḥmad Yādgār, *Tārīkh i Shāhī*, ed. M. Hidayat Hosain (Calcutta, 1939), p. 5.

diplomatic means, but the more high handed tactics of his son Ibrāhīm (r. 923 32/1517 26) provoked sharp opposition. One Afghan *amīr* rebelled in Bihār, while another, Dawlat Khan Lodī, governor of the Punjab, made overtures to Bābur, a descendant of Temür who since 910/1504 had ruled in Kabul and who had already invaded the Punjab three times. Bābur took Lahore (930/1524), and two years later advanced on Delhi. On 8 Rajab 932/ 20 April 1526, despite the numerical superiority of the Delhi forces and thanks in some measure to Bābur's artillery, Ibrāhīm was defeated and killed at Pānīpat and Bābur supplanted the Lodīs.

The victory at Pānīpat marked the establishment of the Mughal empire. Although many historians now regard the expulsion of Bābur's son Humāyūn by Shīr Shāh, and the brief reassertion of Afghan rule in Delhi under the Sūr dynasty (947 62/1540 55), as introducing a restoration also of the Delhi sultanate, this episode is best reserved for a later chapter.

In its early stages, the Delhi sultanate survived upon raids against independent Hindu kingdoms, which yielded plunder and tribute and enabled it to withstand pressure from the Mongols in the north west. From the time of ʿAlāʾ al Dīn Khaljī, a successful attempt was made to field more formidable armies by maximising the appropriation of the agrarian surplus. At the same time, however, the balance of military priorities changed, and the sultans followed a policy of imposing direct control over Hindu states in Rajasthan and the south. This shift brought in its wake administrative and economic problems, with the result that the sultanate forfeited first its more distant territories in Bengal and the south and then those closer to Delhi. Temür's attack effectively delivered the *coup de grâce*; but the Delhi polity still survived for more than a century as one of a number of rival states in northern India.